



26th April 2023

Dear Valued Patients,

Firstly we thank you for your support and understanding during the last few years with the major changes that have taken place in General Practice.

This letter is to inform you that the costs for us to operate our clinic have increased significantly in the past 12 months.

Our consultations have increased in complexity and more time is spent with each patient than ever. The time we allowed traditionally for a standard consultation now takes on average around 4 minutes longer.

You may also know that our clinic provides medical care for our patients in Aged Care Facilities, Saturday morning clinics, Home Visits, Hospital Admissions and After hours access to our Doctor on call. These services come at a significant cost to both the clinic and our Doctors. However we feel they are essential to good quality country General Practice and some of these services are a requirement of us maintaining our practice Accreditation.

In addition to our costs increasing, we have seen several GPs retire or leave our clinic for family reasons over the last 18 months. Despite our best efforts and significant recruitment costs we have not been able to find suitable long term GPs to replace them. A significant proportion of the doctors fee pays for our clinic operational costs and our staff.

All these factors combined put enormous pressure on our clinic to remain financially viable. Our clinic is a large fully equipped medical centre open 6 days per week and our costs are kept as low as possible for a clinic of this size and building space. We employ over 20 reception and nursing staff and without them we could not function.

We want to continue providing our high level of care, however there has to be significant changes to the fees for this to remain viable.

Our new fees are a significant increase from previously and a decision not taken lightly.

In addition to this we are also unable to provide any Bulk Billed consultations with the doctor, as the benefits do not cover costs of even the shortest consultations. Payment on the day of service is also required, except those patients seen in the respiratory room, where an invoice will be sent out. This will be strictly enforced as we have a significant amount of unpaid debt each week that we cannot continue to cover.

Some of our combined Doctor and Nurse services for 2023 will still have no out of pocket costs and this will be explained when you are offered these services.

With your support we hope to continue providing our services for our patients for many years to come.